

Amendments to the Claims

1-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently amended) Safety apparatus, comprising:

a unitary molded syringe having a syringe barrel, said syringe barrel having a distal portion and a distal end, a needle hub integrally extending from said distal ~~end~~ portion, a needle extending from said needle hub, an annular space separating said distal end and a portion of said needle hub, a collar reception mechanism formed at said distal portion proximate to said distal end of said syringe barrel, a collar having a needle protection housing pivotally attached thereto matingly fitted to said collar reception mechanism by first passing said distal end, said annular space enabling said distal end to compress toward said needle hub to facilitate the fitting of said collar to said collar reception mechanism when said collar makes contact therewith, said housing pivotable to a position along the longitudinal axis of said syringe, said housing having a slot wherethrough said needle passes when said housing is pivoted to said position for covering said needle.

11. (Previously presented) Safety apparatus of claim 10, wherein said collar reception mechanism comprises a groove formed circumferentially about said distal portion, and wherein said collar has a diameter slightly larger than said groove so that said collar is rotatable about said groove once said collar is mated to said groove, said collar having at least one protrusion at its inside surface that contacts the surface of said syringe barrel with sufficient tension to prevent free rotation of said collar relative to said syringe barrel.

12. (Original) Safety apparatus of claim 10, further comprising at least one locking portion provided at a base of said housing, and at least an other locking portion provided at the outside circumference of said collar, wherein said one and other locking portions coact with each other to fixedly retain said housing relative to said collar when said housing is pivoted to be in alignment along said longitudinal axis of said syringe to cover said needle.

13. (Original) Safety apparatus of claim 10, further comprising a catch member within said housing for fixedly retaining said needle within said housing when said housing is pivoted along said longitudinal axis of said syringe to cover said needle.

14. (Previously presented) Safety apparatus of claim 10, wherein said collar reception mechanism comprises a groove formed circumferentially about said distal portion, and wherein said collar comprises a plurality of flanges at its inside surface, said flanges preventing said collar from being removed from said syringe barrel once said collar is fitted to said groove.

15. (Previously presented) Safety apparatus of claim 10, wherein said collar reception mechanism comprises a groove formed circumferentially about said distal portion, and wherein said collar has a top surface, the top surface being flush with the distal end of said syringe barrel when said collar is fitted to said groove, said apparatus further comprising a needle sheath for covering said needle before use, said sheath having an open end whereinto said needle is inserted when said sheath is fitted to said needle hub, the top surface of said collar providing a stop for said sheath when said sheath is fitted to said needle hub to cover said needle.

16. (Currently amended) Safety apparatus of claim 10, wherein said needle protection housing comprises a proximal portion and a distal portion, said proximal portion having a base connected by a living hinge to said collar, said proximal portion being semi-circular and having a dimension sufficient to cover said needle hub, said distal portion of said needle protection housing extending from said proximal portion to form a channel for covering said needle with said slot forming the opening through which said needle passes into said channel when said housing is pivoted to be in alignment along said longitudinal axis to cover said needle, an opening provided at the back wall of said proximal portion away from said slot to enable the viewing of the portion of said needle hub enclosed by said proximal portion.

17. (Withdrawn) Safety apparatus of claim 10, wherein said collar reception means comprises a boss formed circumferentially about said distal portion, and wherein said collar comprises a notch formed circumferentially at its inner surface, said collar fitting to said distal portion of said syringe barrel when said notch of said collar mates to said boss at said syringe barrel.

18. (Currently amended) A safety syringe comprising: a unitary molded syringe barrel having a proximal end whereinto a plunger is movably inserted, a distal portion and a distal end, a needle hub having a smaller circumference than said needle barrel integrally extending from said distal end portion, an annular space separating said distal end and a portion of said needle hub, a needle fixedly extending from said needle hub, a sheath having an open end engaged to said hub for covering said needle, a collar reception mechanism formed at said distal portion proximate to said distal end of said syringe barrel, a collar having a needle protection housing pivotally attached thereto matingly fitted to said collar reception mechanism by first passing said distal end, said annular space enabling said distal end to compress toward said needle hub to facilitate the fitting of said collar to said collar reception mechanism when said collar makes contact therewith, said housing pivotable to a position along the longitudinal axis of said syringe, said housing having a slot wherethrough said needle passes when said housing is pivoted to said position for covering said needle after the removal of said sheath from said hub.

19. (Previously presented) Safety syringe of claim 18, wherein said collar reception mechanism comprises a groove, and wherein said collar is rotatable about said groove, said collar having friction means at its inside surface that contacts said syringe barrel to prevent said collar from rotating relative to said syringe barrel without a torque being applied against either said collar or said housing.

20. (Original) Safety syringe of claim 18, wherein said housing comprises a base and at least one locking portion provided at said base and wherein said collar comprises at least an other locking portion provided at its outside circumference, said one and other

locking portions coacting with each other to fixedly retain said housing relative to said collar when said housing is pivoted to be in alignment along said longitudinal axis of said syringe to cover said needle.

21. (Original) Safety syringe of claim 18, wherein said housing comprises an integral catch member for fixedly retaining said needle within said housing when said housing is pivoted along said longitudinal axis of said syringe to cover said needle.

22. (Previously presented) Safety syringe of claim 18, wherein said collar reception mechanism comprises a groove, and wherein said collar comprises a plurality of flanges at its inside surface, said flanges preventing said collar from being removed from said syringe barrel once said collar is snap fitted to said groove.

23. (Previously presented) Safety syringe of claim 18, wherein said collar reception mechanism comprises a groove, and wherein said collar has a top surface, the top surface of said collar being flush with the distal end of said syringe barrel when said collar is fitted to said groove, the top surface of said collar providing a stop for said sheath when said sheath is engaged to said needle hub to cover said needle.

24. (Currently amended) Safety syringe of claim 18, wherein said needle protection housing comprises a proximal portion and a distal portion, said proximal portion having a base connected by a living hinge to said collar, said proximal portion being semi-circular for covering said needle hub, said distal portion being a channel extending from said proximal portion with said slot forming the opening along said channel wherethrough said needle passes into said channel when said housing is pivoted to be in alignment along said longitudinal axis, an opening provided at the back wall of said proximal portion away from said slot to enable the viewing of the portion of said needle hub enclosed by said proximal portion.

25. (Previously presented) Safety syringe of claim 18, wherein said collar reception mechanism comprises a boss formed circumferentially about said distal portion, and wherein said collar comprises a notch formed circumferentially at its inner surface, said collar fitting to said distal portion of said syringe barrel when said notch of said collar mates to said boss at said syringe barrel.

26. (Previously presented) Safety apparatus of claim 10, further comprising a sheath fitted to the needle hub to cover the needle prior to the needle being used so as to ensure that the needle stays sterile prior to use.

27. (New) A safety syringe comprising:

- a unitary molded syringe barrel having a proximal end whereinto a plunger is movably inserted, a distal portion and a circumferential wall that forms a distal end that is part of said distal portion, a needle hub having a smaller circumference than said needle barrel integrally extending from said distal portion with at least one portion thereof surrounded by said distal end so that an annular space separates said distal end and said needle hub, and a collar reception mechanism formed at said distal portion proximate to said distal end of said syringe barrel;

- a needle fixedly extending from said needle hub;

- a sheath engaged to said hub for covering said needle prior to said needle being used;

- a collar movably fitted to said collar reception mechanism, said collar being mated to said collar reception mechanism by first passing said distal end, said annular space enabling said distal end to compress toward said needle hub to facilitate the mating of said collar to said collar reception mechanism when said collar makes contact therewith;

- a needle protection housing pivotally attached to said collar, said housing pivotable to a position along the longitudinal axis of said needle, said housing having a slot wherethrough said needle passes when said housing is pivoted to said position for covering said needle after the removal of said sheath from said hub.

28. (New) Syringe of claim 27, wherein said housing comprises a proximal portion and a distal portion, said proximal portion having an opening at its back wall away from said slot.